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Bill would require hospital pricing information and quality report card

Assembly Majority Leader's legislation strengthens and expands on bills signed into law last year.

(SACRAMENTO, CA) – Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer introduced legislation to make information about quality and cost of hospital care readily available to Californians.

"Rising health care costs are bleeding patients and employers dry. The last thing people need when they are sick is sticker shock from their hospital bills."

-- Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer

In response to allegations of price gouging by hospitals and an Assembly Health Committee investigation into the billing prices of Tenet Healthcare Corporation, a law that Frommer introduced, the Payers' Bill of Rights, was enacted in 2003,

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Frommer stands up for education with teachers, students, parents

Assembly Majority Leader and Glendale groups protest Governor Schwarzenegger's proposed budget cuts to K-12 education.

(GLENDALE, CA) – Groups of students, parents, teachers, school board members, administrators and employees of the Glendale Unified School District joined Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer to protest Governor Schwarzenegger's refusal to honor his promise to restore funds he cut last year from K-12 education.

"Governor Schwarzenegger broke his word to our teachers, parents and students, and that broken promise will cost our schools between \$18,000 and \$20,000 per classroom," Frommer said.



During budget negotiations last year, Governor Schwarzenegger made a deal with schools, promising that they would they would not endure cuts in 2005, if they

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requiring that hospital “chargemasters,” or price lists, be made available to the public. In addition, hospitals were required to provide their price list for the 25 most common inpatient and 25 most common outpatient procedures.

However, concerns arose when Frommer learned that hospitals’ price list of 25 procedures being provided to the public were of questionable value for a patient shopping around, such as prices for 15 minutes of “gait training” and charges for different kinds of blood tests.

Assembly Bill 1045, introduced this year, will require hospitals to provide the public information regarding the price of whole procedures rather than itemized lists of different costs, information that would eventually be available on the Web site of the state Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development.

Assembly Bill 1046 would require that the state create a public document called the California Hospital Report Card, evaluating hospitals on their quality of care, criteria to be decided by the hospital industry, consumer groups, employer organizations and nonprofits. ♦

Frommer speaks out against pension reform

Assembly Majority Leader joins Los Angeles area law enforcement to protest Governor’s proposed pension reform.



(LOS ANGELES, CA) – Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer joined Speaker Fabian Nuñez, Los Angeles area law enforcement and firefighters, their widows and survivors to protest Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger’s proposed pension

agreed to take a \$2 billion cut in 2004. An additional \$2.3 billion cut proposed this year directly violates that promise and undermines voter-approved Proposition 98, which guarantees funding for K-12 education.

Those cuts directly affect the materials students need for classrooms, the number of teachers and staff that students will have available, after school programs and other extra curricular activities that students currently use. According to a recent “Quality Counts 2005” report by *Education Week*, California was already ranked 44th in the nation for per-pupil funding.

Frommer was joined by Glendale School Board President Greg Krikorian, School Board Members Chuck Sambar and Mary Boger, Glendale School Superintendent Dr. Michael Escalante, Dr. Maria Gandera, Principal, Benjamin Franklin Elementary, Glendale Teachers Association President Sandy Fink, Glendale Council PTA President Patty Scriptor, Hoover High School Student Body President David Kim and other parents, teachers, students, administrators and school employees at the rally. ♦

Seniors weigh in on Rx drugs at town hall meeting

Frommer introduces bills offering real relief to consumers struggling to afford medications.

(SAN JOSE, CA) – Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer hosted a community town hall meeting, giving residents a chance to discuss their concerns regarding the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs and possible solutions to provide relief.

In California, taxpayers spent almost \$3 billion for prescription drugs in the Medi-Cal program in 2002-03, a figure that rose to \$3.8 billion in 2003-04. The California Department of Corrections has seen its drug costs spike by 20% per year and now pays more than \$125 million annually.

“Americans are paying more for prescription drugs than anyone else in the world,” Frommer said. “Our tax dollars support 1/3 of the research and development drug companies do. Yet, many of us can not afford to buy those new drugs when we get sick.”

reforms.

The Governor's plan, which he has since rescinded, would have privatized pensions and stripped death and disability benefits from the survivors and dependents of our fallen public safety officers. ♦

California State Treasurer discusses budget with AD 43

Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer invites hundreds of community leaders to series of breakfasts with statewide officials.

(BURBANK, CA) – California State Treasurer Phil Angelides visited Burbank to discuss issues regarding the state's fiscal health with community leaders over a breakfast hosted by Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer.

"It is critical that our communities at home are well aware of everything that is going on in Sacramento on their behalf," Frommer said.

Angelides discussed California's current budget crisis and solutions for future fiscal health. In addition, he criticized Governor Schwarzenegger's plans for reform regarding cutting pensions and instituting across-the-board cuts.

The breakfast was the second in a series of breakfasts Frommer is hosting in the 43rd Assembly District with statewide officials. Attorney General Bill Lockyer and Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi have also been guests at recent breakfasts. ♦



Frommer has introduced a series of bills to:

- AB 72: Require drug makers to supply the state with all its data about the safety and effectiveness of drugs being marketed in California.
- AB 73: Provide information to consumers about international pharmacies that meet state standards for safety and accessibility but sell Rx drugs for 40% to 75% cheaper.
- AB 75: Establish a state program offering a drug discount card for low-income Californians.
- AB 76: Consolidate drug purchasing for state programs to negotiate for lower drug prices. ♦

Bill aims to get more Californians to college

California State Treasurer Phil Angelides and Frommer create legislation for UCs, CSUs and community colleges.

(SACRAMENTO, CA) – An innovative plan by California State Treasurer Phil Angelides and Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer to put California's massive state-owned property portfolio to work at creating new funding for higher education is making its way through the Legislature.

Assembly Bill 593 will create the California Hope Endowment for higher education. The endowment would operate like a charitable foundation, independent of individual college systems but working in concert with them. The endowment, which would be governed by a public board with appointees of the Governor and the governing boards of colleges and universities, could accept donations from corporations, individuals and foundations to supplement its assets.

To help fund the endowment, AB 593 would create the Cal Hope Trust, shifting a portion of the real estate owned by the state government to a public trust corporation that would manage it like a business and earn returns from it for the endowment.

The money from the endowment, estimated to be as much as \$300 million a year, could be used to double current outreach programs or fund full-fee scholarships for 385,000 community college students or 19,000 California State University students. ♦

Cristina Pérez chosen as Woman of the Year

Assembly Majority Leader chooses attorney, community activist and TV star as AD 43 Woman of the Year.

(SACRAMENTO, CA) – Glendale resident Cristina Pérez, known best as the enormously popular host of the Spanish language Telemundo program, “La Corte de Familia,” has been chosen by Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer as the Woman of the Year for the 43rd District.

Daughter of Columbian parents, Pérez was born in the United States and raised in Mexico but has called Glendale her home for more than 20 years. An attorney specializing in immigration and nationality law, she founded Pérez González, A Professional Law Corporation. She is an active member and leader of several community and legal organizations, including Padres Contra El Cancer (Parents Against Cancer), National Association of Latina Leader, Manny Mota International Foundation and the Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Cancer Center. She also spends a substantial amount of her time educating people on immigration issues and offering pro-bono representation to people unable to secure legal assistance.

UPCOMING EVENTS 43RD AD

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, May 21, 2005

BURBANK BLOCK PARTY

Johnny Carson Park, 400 S. Bob Hope Drive, Burbank

2:30 p.m. Thursdays

“Capitol Connection with Assemblyman Dario Frommer”

Charter Communications Channel 25

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Frommer unveils plan to lower gas prices

Legislation would dedicate billions to transportation projects while providing California consumers relief at the pump. .

(SACRAMENTO, CA) – Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer and Speaker Fabian Nuñez unveiled the Democrats’ “Build Opportunity” plan, a package of bills to provide relief to California’s at the pump while dedicating critical funds to transportation projects.

The bills will cut gasoline costs by 11 cents a gallon by eliminating the sales tax on gas. Meanwhile, they would raise general sales tax by ¼ cent, to make up for the loss of sales tax on gas. However, overall, the average consumer would pay less in taxes. For example, a consumer will receive a \$2 reduction off a \$40 purchase of gas, but only pay 10 cents more in sales tax for a \$40 pair of sneakers.

The “Build Opportunity” plan will also issue a \$10 billion bond for essential transportation projects up and down our state, including adding new lanes to congested freeways, expanding bottleneck intersections and improving highways, roads and transit systems. The bond will be paid back through a gradual increase in gasoline excise tax, just four cents over the next 10 years. ♦

